

Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

Completion of Safe & Sound

November 15, 2012

by Bob Brendel

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Members of the MoDOT and KTU Constructors Safe & Sound teams celebrated the early, under-budget completion of the program at the October Commission meeting in Neosho.

In May 2009, KTU Constructors, a joint venture of Kiewit Western Company, Traylor Brothers, Inc. and United Contractors, Inc., was selected as the design-build contractor. They committed to finish the project by December 31, 2013, and ultimately beat that goal by 14 months.

The Commission celebrated the anticipated completion of Safe & Sound at its October meeting in Neosho. There, KTU Executive Scott Cassels and MoDOT Project Director Ken Warbritton cited teamwork as the key to the successful completion of the program. Cassels noted that 491 of KTU's 554 bridges were completed by what he called "the hometown team" – 22 Missouri contractors and more than 100 subcontractors and materials suppliers. An additional 21 local bridge builders and many more subcontractors performed the rehab work. "You are blessed with fantastic craftsmen here in Missouri," Cassels said, noting that as many as 500 were working at any one time on the many KTU jobsites.

Safe & Sound was not a complicated construction project (the average bridge was 150 feet long and 24 feet wide), but the logistics were mind-blowing – moving men, equipment and materials all over the state. Cassels said that on its projects alone, 20,000 loads were delivered in three construction seasons and that KTU vehicles traveled three million miles (equivalent to 120 trips around the globe) carrying personnel who administered the work.

The key to the rapid completion of Safe & Sound was the strategy to close roads and replace bridges in the same location, eliminating the need for costly roadwork. The average closure was just 42 days, or half the time of a normal bridge replacement project. "We proved that Missourians will accept some inconvenience if you work with them in advance, show some flexibility in when you are going to close the road, then follow through with the speed you have promised," Warbritton said.

MHTC Commissioner Stephen Miller was gratified to learn that 90 percent of the work was performed by Missouri workers. "This project demonstrates that design-build does not export jobs. We combed the country seeking innovation then utilized our local contractors to deliver the work."

MoDOT Director Kevin Keith noted that the lessons learned from Safe & Sound "has created a new model for bridge projects in not only our state but for our country." Cassels added, "Other states should take note of what Missouri has achieved with a statewide bridge program that has delivered such dramatic results. We can't fix crumbling infrastructure a little bit at a time."

In just slightly more than three-and-a-half years a project that was expected to take more than five years has been completed. And as a result, Missourians in every county of the state are driving across new and improved bridges that will serve their needs for many years to come.

The \$685 million Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Program drew to a close on November 8 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on the Route 11 bridge over the BNSF Railroad in Chariton County. At the event, Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission Chairman Rudy Farber said, "This was a fabulous program - the biggest bridge program in Missouri history. It's really hard to imagine – 802 new or improved bridges in just 3-1/2 years."

When the Commission launched the program in September 2008, a goal was established to have 802 bridge projects completed by the end of 2014. Nearly 250 of those bridges were to be rehabilitation projects processed through MoDOT's monthly letting schedule, with 100 under contract by the spring of 2009. The remaining 554 bridges – all complete replacements – were to be accomplished through a single design-build contract.



MoDOT Safe & Sound Project Director Ken Warbritton is flanked by KTU leaders Troy Heckmaster (left) and Harry Koenigs (right) in cutting a celebratory cake that was shared with those who attended the October Commission meeting.

As a result of the Safe & Sound program, MoDOT reversed the recent trend that showed a growing percentage of deficient bridges. Now, 79 percent of Missouri's bridges are in good condition.

Maintaining that momentum, however, is unlikely within MoDOT's current construction budget that has fallen to about \$700 million per year. Farber said, "Missourians aren't likely to see this type of improvement project again until we solve this funding shortage. We are committed to maintain our current system for as long as possible, but significant projects, like this one, will not be possible."

FASTEST SAFE & SOUND PROJECTS

Box Culvert	27 hours*
Single Span	8 days
Double Span	31 days
Triple Span	28 days
Four Span	33 days

* Nighttime impact to traffic.

Traveler Information Map Updated and Improved



MoDOT has upgraded its Traveler Information App just in time for winter. Thanks to input from employees and the public, the app now navigates better, has new features and works on iPads and tablets.

"We've improved the pinch and zoom function and added the ability to create a personalized route list so users can quickly see the routes they travel most often," said Matt Hiebert, customer relations production manager.

"My Routes" lets users add the routes they travel most to a text report. That way, they can view these roads and highways with a single tap on the screen rather than having to navigate to a frequently traveled region. You can even add them in the order you drive them.

The Traveler Information App will also work with iPads and Android-compatible tablets, another feature requested by users.

MoDOT reminds everyone who uses the app to check road conditions before they leave for their destinations. Not when they're driving.

"Our traveler map app lets you check road conditions and work zones anywhere you go – but don't use it while you're driving," said Hiebert. "Distracted driving is a leading contributor to traffic crashes, so check the map before you go. Put the phone down, and concentrate on the road."

To download the new Traveler Information App, just visit the iPhone or Android app stores and type "MoDOT" in the search field. Any employee with a compatible mobile device can use the app.

"Employee input played a big part in this improvement," Hiebert said. "They had some great ideas."

Users of the earlier iPhone and Android versions will receive a prompt screen that links them to the app stores of their respective device. From there, they can download the new version.

Statewide Calendar Features Upcoming MoDOT Highlights

by Matt Hiebert

A Statewide Calendar of Events has been added to the Sharepoint homepage!

This calendar will announce events affecting MoDOT organizationally. Commission meetings, high impact conferences, safety campaigns, state holidays, insurance deadlines and similar happenings will be the primary focus of the calendar.

If you have recommendations for any event that employees need to be aware of on a statewide level, please submit the information to Dana Kaiser for review. Include the name of the event, location, date, time and any other pertinent information you feel would benefit employees.

Although not yet fully populated, the calendar can be viewed on the Sharepoint homepage by typing in "sharepoint" in your browser address bar.

<http://sharepoint/Pages/Default.aspx>

Month : November 2012 (2)		
11/8/2012 11:00 AM	11/8/2012 1:00 PM	Commission Meeting
11/28/2012 12:00 PM	11/29/2012 1:00 PM	AGC/MoDOT Annual Co-op Meeting
Month : December 2012 (3)		
12/13/2012 10:00 AM	12/13/2012 3:00 PM	Senior Management Team Meeting
12/5/2012 9:00 AM	12/5/2012 11:00 AM	Commission Meeting
12/19/2012 12:00 PM	12/19/2012 4:00 PM	Area Engineer Meeting
Month : January 2013 (3)		
1/23/2013 10:00 AM	1/23/2013 2:00 PM	Senior Management Team Meeting
1/17/2013 9:00 AM	1/17/2013 1:00 PM	Commission Meeting
1/13/2013 8:00 AM	1/17/2013 5:00 PM	TRB
Month : February 2013 (3)		
2/21/2013 8:00 AM	2/21/2013 1:00 PM	Tracker
2/6/2013 9:00 AM	2/6/2013 1:00 PM	Commission Meeting

View Your Medical Explanation of Benefits with Coventry Online Services

by Michelle Schlup



Make the most of your health and benefits by accessing My Online Services(SM). MOS is Coventry Health Care's secure member portal that gives you access to find, use and control your personal health information right at your finger tips.

For example, each time a claim is processed at Coventry, an explanation of benefits EOB is created. EOB's are mailed to your home only when a claim is processed and you owe a portion of the claim (member responsibility). Coventry mails the EOB's

twice a month.

For those claims with no member responsibility, an EOB will not be mailed to your home; however, Coventry makes it easy for you to access them online. Viewing your EOB's online will allow you the convenience of viewing not only the EOB's that you receive by mail with member responsibility, but the remaining EOB's where member responsibility does not apply. Plus, you can even sign up to receive email notifications each time a new EOB is available. Just visit the MoDOT/MSHP web site at modot-mshp-cvty.com and select "Login or Register Now" from the My Online Services box on the right-hand side of the page.

You can also request a copy of an EOB by calling the Coventry Customer Service Organization at 800-627-6406.

What's Happening



Winter Slips, Trips and Falls - New Safety Video Available

A new safety video, produced by the northwest district, is available on the intranet. This video offers safety reminders when snow and ice cover sidewalks, stairs, and our vehicles. [New Video](#)

This is the third video in the safety video series. The first two: mowing, produced by the northeast district; and asphalt operations, produced by the central district; along with the employee safety testimonial video, can be viewed on the intranet.

Additional videos will be available in the coming months.



October Safety Jackpot Winner

Assistant Maintenance Supervisor Jerome Henson is the winner of the October Safety Jackpot drawing. Jerome is from the SE district, Sikeston building. You can watch a video of Jerome and his grab bag experience on the SE district's page - [Winner](#)

October Retirements

Joseph Whelan - NE - 12 years
 Norman Hellebusch - NE - 27 years
 Robert Wray - KC - 28 years
 Glenn Copeland - SL - 7 years
 Tommy Abercrombie - SW - 27 years

Duane Mahan - SW - 28 years
 Bryan Wessler - SW - 25 years
 Cecil Hyde - SW - 17 years
 Mike Metcalf - SW - 27 years
 Ronald Branstine - SW - 25 years

Edward Schaefer - CO - 14 years
 Mike Fritz - CO - 29 years
 Larry Grantham - CO - 7 years
 Terrell Martin - CO - 15 years

In Memorium

Matthew Reary – Active Employee
 Central District – October 28
 John Pridgeon
 former D3 – September 24
 Seaman Rayfield
 former D9 – October 3
 Joe Brown
 former D9 – October 5
 Marlin E. McGinnis
 former D9 – October 8

Donald Grob
 former D6 – October 8
 Hilbert Strobel
 former D5 – October 11
 Arthur Lorence
 former D2 – October 11
 Melvin Dunn
 former D8 – October 12

Carmac Williamson
 former D9 – October 17
 Roy Delmain
 former D6 – October 24
 William Lohmeyer
 former D6 – October 29
 William Cox
 former D2 – November 5

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Central Office

National Conference Focuses on Managing Roadside

by Holly Dentner



Think about the last time you spent the weekend working in your yard – whether you’ve got acreage or a small residential lot, you can spend lots of time mowing, raking leaves, battling weeds, and trimming shrubs and trees.

With the miles and miles of roadside MoDOT maintains, managing all that vegetation takes the effort to a much larger scale. It takes a team of roadside managers and maintenance crews across the state to keep our roadsides attractive, clean, and most importantly, safe.

To make sure our crews have the best tools to do that job, MoDOT recently joined forces with the National Roadside Vegetation Management Association and the North American Weed Management Association for a combined conference in Branson, Mo.

Around 250 roadside specialists from around the country attended the conference on Oct. 29 through Nov. 1, attending sessions on everything from computerized weed identification to railroad crossing safety.

“Conferences like this give us an opportunity to learn about best practices from around the country,” said Roadside Management Specialist Stacy Armstrong. “We’re always looking for ways to work more efficiently and share our ideas with others.”



MoDOT employees from every district were represented at the conference, which is held annually.

Happy Birthday, Peanut!

As the most famous real turtle in Missouri, and maybe even the entire country, Peanut the Turtle has made a big splash as the official mascot of MoDOT and the Department of Conservation’s No MORE Trash! campaign.

Friends and fans of Peanut gathered at the August A. Busch Conservation Area in St Charles on Nov. 8 to celebrate her 28th birthday. The event was organized by Conservation naturalist Matt Ormsby.

“I decided to hold a birthday party for Peanut after working at the state fair and seeing how amazed young adults with families were after hearing that she was 28 years old,” said Ormsby. “Many of them remember seeing her when they were a kid at the state fair or at school.”

Peanut is a native St. Louisan. She’s the red-eared slider who was found in 1993 in the St. Louis area with a plastic six-pack ring struck around her body. The ring caused her shell to grow into the unusual figure-eight shape for which she was named.

Currently residing at the Busch Conservation Area, Peanut travels around Missouri, helping remind us to consider wildlife and put litter in its place. She has been featured in numerous TV appearances, newspaper articles, and makes an annual visit to the Missouri State Fair in Sedalia. With a figure like hers, she is definitely one-of-a-kind.



Biggest Loser Holiday Edition



The Biggest Loser - MEE Zone Slim in to Summer Edition was very successful. The group lost over 350 pounds! With such great results and employees dedicating time to their health, another edition will be kicking off soon. I would like to invite you to participate in the Biggest Loser - MEE Zone Holiday Edition. This edition will last 12 weeks, beginning on Wednesday, Nov. 28 and ending on Wednesday, Feb. 20. The top two individuals with the highest percentages of weight loss will split the jackpot 50/50. If you are interested in participating, please see the flyer for more details. Entrants can sign up until Nov. 28. - [Biggest Loser - Holiday Edition](#)

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Northwest District

Safe & Sound is Officially Over

A crowd of more than 60 were on hand Thursday, Nov. 8, to help open the Route 11 bridge over the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad in Chariton County. It is the 802nd and final bridge in the Missouri Department of Transportation's Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Program. This was also the 190th bridge opened in the Northwest District.

Missouri Highways and Transportation Commissioners, MoDOT staff, employees of KTU Constructors, the Northwestern R-1 band, local residents, political representatives and even Barrel Bob were all present. Together, they helped to celebrate the completion of the Safe & Sound program two years ahead of schedule.



"This was a fabulous program - the biggest bridge program in Missouri history," said MHTC Chairman Rudy Farber. "It's really hard to imagine - 802 new or improved bridges in just 3-1/2 years. Missourians aren't likely to see this type of improvement project again until we solve this funding shortage. We are committed to maintain our current system for as long as possible, but significant projects, like the one we are celebrating today, will be curtailed."

The Route 11 BNSF Bridge, located five miles north of Mendon, closed for construction on Sept. 4 after being delayed several weeks when migratory birds were discovered on the bridge structure. A video about the bridge and its construction is available at <http://www.modot.org/northwest/>. Photos of the ceremony can also be accessed from the website on the flickr account, and the video of the actual ceremony is out on YouTube at MoDOTNWDistrict.

"The Northwest was honored to end up with almost 25 percent of the total bridge improvements in this program," said Northwest District Engineer Don Wichern. "With these better bridges, we have made an investment that will last for many years to come with wider structures that will require less maintenance."



The Safe & Sound Program was a two-pronged program to improve more than 800 of the state's poorest bridges in five years by Oct. 31, 2014. The 802 bridges were divided into two groups: 248 were identified for rehabilitation (typically, a new deck on existing substructure) by MoDOT and 554 were completely replaced by KTU Constructors. KTU committed to complete their portion by Dec. 31, 2013, and they are ahead of that schedule by 14 months. The total cost of the entire program was \$685 million.

For a complete list of bridges included in the Safe & Sound Program in Northwest Missouri as well as before and after photos, visit www.modot.mo.gov/northwest/safeandsound/index2.htm.



Photos by Melissa Black

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Northeast District

Bridge Interests Online and Traditional Attendees

A new bridge on U.S. 54 over the Mississippi River, aka Champ Clark Bridge, may not be funded for construction, but MoDOT and Illinois DOT are working together to begin the environmental assessment process.

The first public meeting was held this week at the Louisiana YMCA with 40 people attending. Comments were shared with MoDOT about the location of a new bridge and includes options to the north, south and in the same place. Keith Killen, the project manager, was pleased with how the community was engaged.

The Citizen's Advisory Group met this week to discuss public comments outside of the meeting, and the website at www.champclarkbridge.com has more than 35 members having a conversation about the bridge!



Jerad Noland (middle), district design engineer, visits with attendees at the U.S. 54 Mississippi River Bridge public meeting held last week in Louisiana. Attendees were invited to draw on maps where they would like to see a new bridge built.

Around the District...



Spring cleaning? While not prevalent across the state, the anticipation of winter and its first event does create excitement for some employees. Okay...excitement may not be the right word, yet many of our crews are cleaning, painting, restocking, and prepping to make sure equipment, materials and their buildings are ready. Randy Muck, senior equipment technician in Kirksville, pictured above, has been getting their equipment ready for the first snow.



Kirksville maintenance crew members are getting prepared to install more than 100 tubes throughout Adair County over the next month. Robert Cole is in the loader, while Kerry Harvey and Todd Smith are unloading.



The Culver Stockton College Homecoming parade draws thousands of people to the small community of Canton, and some MoDOT employees, and their "recruits," participated with an Arrive Alive float, complete with Buckles the Bear! Thanks to all those who participated including Canton crew members Bryan Phillips, Scotty Cockrell, and Arron Burbridge.



The NE District has one broom truck, and it has had a workout over the last few weeks on I-70. The broom truck, which rotates throughout the district, is used two times a year to clean off the barrier walls on the interstate. Dan Brumagin, maintenance

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MoDOT Receives 2012 Power of Work Award

Goodwill, reStart applaud MoDOT for community partnering efforts

by Jennifer Benefield

Independence. Self-sufficiency. Work – it's a powerful force – and in this country, it is key to empowering persons with special needs and barriers to employment to achieve success. In Kansas City, MoDOT was recognized Nov. 8 by the Goodwill of Western Missouri and Eastern Kansas for its innovative efforts to offer the power of work and self-esteem to individuals who need a hand up.

MoDOT was nominated for the 2012 Power of Work Award by reStart, Inc., an interfaith ministry that is committed to providing shelter and supportive services to homeless men, women, youth and families with the goals of helping persons move toward independence and self-sufficiency and ending homelessness in our community.

"Employment really is a launching pad for folks to have control of their lives economically," said reStart Executive Director Evie Craig. "What employment offers the people who we serve is the opportunity to not have their lives charted by government assistance programs, but to chart their own course and achieve it."

This year, approximately 30 reStart clients were employed at various times by MoDOT throughout the Kansas City District. They assisted crews at the Lee's Summit, Stadium, Mulberry and Belton maintenance facilities with roadside beautification efforts to include litter removal, weed-eating and trimming.

"MoDOT is creating positions for reStart clients that other organizations might not do," said reStart Health Benefits Advocate Cachet Montgomery. "They're helping our clients get past some of those barriers." Barriers to employment can include homelessness, limited education or work history, access to transportation, or even childcare.

And, there are plans to continue this mutually beneficial program. "We recently received approval to continue with the program and now include brush removal," said Lee's Summit Maintenance Supervisor Scott Banes. "The reStart folks that come to MoDOT want to work. They don't want to be at a shelter. They want to provide for themselves and for their families."

Banes, along with Lee's Summit Maintenance Superintendent Marcus Slaughter were featured in a [Goodwill video](#) talking about the success of the partnership. They, along with District Maintenance Engineer Jesse Skinner and Maintenance Supervisors Clem Anderson, Chris Sholl and Ronnie Smith were recognized at an awards luncheon emceed by Fox 4 News Anchor John Holt.

The award also showcases MoDOT's commitment to others, and serves to encourage all employers to emulate the actions and achievements of MoDOT. "Work is very important to those who have had barriers simply because it can be demoralizing looking for a job in this climate...and there just aren't that many doors open" said Slaughter. "The opportunity to do an honest day's work for an honest day's wage impacts people tremendously."

Click [HERE](#) to view the "The Goodwill 2012 Power of Work" video (10:03).



Kansas City District Maintenance Engineer Jesse Skinner, Maintenance Superintendent Marcus Slaughter and Maintenance Supervisors Clem Anderson, Scott Banes, Chris Sholl and Ronnie Smith accepted the Goodwill's 2012 Power of Work Award on behalf of MoDOT from reStart, Inc. Executive Director Evie Craig (center holding award). This award recognizes community employers for their innovative efforts to offer the power of work, self-esteem and self-sufficiency to individuals with special needs and other barriers to employment. Photo: Steve Porter



Maintenance Supervisor Marcus Slaughter explains how important it is to help people overcome barriers and the impact it has on their lives during an award reception honoring MoDOT for its commitment to others.

Photo: Steve Porter

Planning Studies at the Community's Fingertips

Online public meetings give customers more ways to provide feedback

The KC District is staying busy with current construction projects, while also planning for future projects. The [future of the U.S. 69 Bridges over the Missouri River](#), identifying the best location for a future interchange in I-35 near Kearney, and determining the future of I-70 in downtown Kansas City, are a few planning studies currently under way. The district seeks public input for each of these studies.

An Environmental Impact Statement is in the early stages of the U.S. 69 Bridges, commonly referred to as the Fairfax Bridge and the Platte Purchase Bridge. MoDOT in conjunction with KDOT is completing an EIS to determine the best way to address these ailing structures. An online meeting is currently accepting feedback from surrounding communities and motorists about the Purpose and Need Statement and the initial range of alternatives. Those wanting to join in the conversation about these structures are encouraged to visit the online meetings through the end of November.

Another study in the works is the I-35 Access Justification Report. This study will analyze the need and help determine the best location for a future interchange in the area south of Route 92 in Kearney near 19th Street to 136th Street along I-35. As the City of Kearney continues to grow and thrive, city growth projections estimate that the city will continue to expand. The existing transportation network is strained, with only one major interchange providing access to the city. Public input regarding location is being accepted through the end of November.

Another opportunity for public feedback is for an environmental study of I-70 in Jackson County. The study is a Second Tier EIS for the future I-70 from The Paseo interchange to the Blue Ridge Cutoff interchange. This section of I-70 is currently experiencing deteriorating pavement and bridges, traffic delays and congestion, and merging and weaving at interchanges.

The Second Tier EIS will build on and extend the work of the [I-70 First Tier EIS](#) for future I-70 that results in the best possible plan to improve the safety and conditions of I-70. The study team is currently asking for input regarding the initial alternatives.

Want to join the conversation? Check out the online meetings by clicking on a banner below.



For more info

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Central District

Cameras Catch Hurricane Deck Bridge Construction

Want to see how construction of the Hurricane Deck Bridge near Sunrise Beach is coming along? You now have that opportunity at your fingertips.

MoDOT's website offers a link to a time-lapsed camera located on the bridge that captures construction images every 10 to 15 minutes. The link can be found under Major Projects at www.modot.org.

Currently, the cameras are capturing construction crews forming and pouring columns, beams and caps for several bridge piers. The bridge foundations have been set in the water, and overall the project is about a third of the way complete.

"This is an extensive and complex project," said Resident Engineer John Sanders. "As an example, the depth of the water at the bridge's foundation locations ranges from 40 feet to 85 feet deep. That's a lot of water to go through just to start drilling."



Time-lapsed cameras show construction of the new Hurricane Deck bridge near Sunrise Beach.

The new bridge is being built on the east side of the existing structure. It will be wider than the current bridge with two 12-foot driving lanes and seven-foot shoulders on each side. The existing bridge is open to traffic during the construction of the new structure, which will be completed in late 2013.

Winter Operations Drill Deemed a Success

Some mid-Missourians were understandably intrigued when they saw trucks with snowplows and spreaders driving state routes in central Missouri on Oct. 31. The trucks were taking part in the department's first statewide winter operations drill, which also included activating the district's emergency operations center.

"The drill was a great way for us to give our employees some good practice in handling a winter storm in advance of the real thing," said District Maintenance Engineer Mark Giessinger. "It also gave us a chance to test our timing and assess our equipment and staffing."

In addition to providing a good refresher for MoDOT employees, the drill received positive media coverage in central Missouri and throughout the state. That goes a long way in educating our customers about our operations and our plan of action for winter weather.



Snowplow trucks leave the Lebanon maintenance facility. The trucks and their drivers were taking part in the statewide winter operations drill held Oct. 31.

"We know we have a job to do, to keep the roads as clear as possible for the traveling public," Brandon Schreimann, Jefferson City maintenance crew leader, told a reporter with the Jefferson City News Tribune. "The more comfortable they (MoDOT employees) are, the safer they will be when the snow does hit."

"We have family members who drive the roads, too," added Jefferson City Maintenance Supervisor Kent Howard. "We take pride in what we're doing. We do our best."

The drill isn't the only element to MoDOT's winter weather operations. All maintenance employees complete an annual winter skills training that serves as a refresher course for plowing snow. The training assures that proper equipment operation, plowing techniques and safety measures are fresh on employees' minds as winter approaches.

Thanks to our EOC Staffers!



Traffic Supervisor Kevin Eggemeyer explains the statewide radio communications system to employees scheduled to staff the district's Emergency Operations Center during winter weather events or other emergencies.

In addition to the employees who are out on the roads during a snow fight or other emergency, it takes a number of other staff members to hold down the fort back in the office.

That's why about 45 Central District and Central Office employees were recently trained on the goals and expectations of the district's Emergency Operations Center. The training covered everything from when to report to the EOC to the most common questions asked during a winter weather emergency.

District Traffic Engineer Trent Brooks explained to the participants the four broad expectations for those staffing the EOC: support MoDOT forces in the field; inform the public of road conditions through the Traveler Information Map; respond to public inquiries; and remember that emergency operations are not limited to snow events, but could include other emergencies such as floods and tornados.

In addition, the employees were shown how to log into the telephone system, where to find pertinent information and how to communicate with field staff via the radio. Those participants unfamiliar with using TMS were also offered training on that system.

"We want to thank you for helping to staff the Central District EOC during snow fights and other emergency situations," Brooks told the EOC participants. "Your assistance enables us to keep Missourians safe on our highways and provide outstanding customer service."

District Happenings



Elmo and Big Bird - a.k.a. Administrative Technician Stephanie Green and her son, Eli - got into the Halloween Spirit by participating in the district's annual Halloween Costume Contest. Senior Traffic Studies Specialist Tamara Pitts, who dressed up as a "blind referee," was the winner of the contest, which was sponsored by the district's Activities Committee. Employees paid a dollar to vote for their choice of the best costume. The costume contest raised \$143 for the Missouri State Employees Charitable Campaign, and Tamara took home \$50!



About 20 members of the Central Region's Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety marched in the University of Missouri-Columbia's 101st Homecoming Parade on Oct. 27. Decked out in black and gold Arrive Alive shirts, the walkers, who braved the parade's 7 a.m. start time, passed out pencils, chapstick, window clings and key chains stressing the need to buckle up. The group was accompanied by Buckle Bear and the red rollover car. This is the fifth year in a row the coalition has taken part in Mizzou's homecoming parade.



The Lafayette Interchange Advisory Group met for the first time on Oct. 31 to discuss the status of the interchange project and the expectations for the group. A diamond interchange is planned for the intersection of Lafayette Street and the Rex Whittom Expressway in Jefferson City. The interchange will help relieve congestion and improve safety and connectivity between the expressway and key local sites, including the Missouri State Penitentiary redevelopment site, Lincoln University and Jefferson City High School. Here, advisory group members listen as Project Manager Mike Dusenberg explains the goals and challenges of the project.

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Comments & Suggestions

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St. Louis
District

Westbound I-70 Blanchette Bridge Closure and Rehabilitation Underway

MoDOT Initiates Command Center to Monitor Traffic Flow

by Linda Wilson Horn

The anticipation of the major bridge closure connecting St. Louis and St. Charles Counties is now a reality. Interstate 70 at the Blanchette Missouri River Bridge was reduced to three lanes in each direction from the normal five lanes on Sunday, Nov. 4. All vehicles are now traveling on the eastbound lanes of the bridge while the westbound direction is closed for a one-year \$63 million rehabilitation.



To manage traffic flow through the first couple weeks of the closure, leaders of the Blanchette Bridge team established an incident command center. St. Louis staff monitored traffic flow

and the suggested detour routes during morning and evening rush periods. The center was filled with experts on state and county arterial flow, law enforcement, mass transit and the local municipalities who worked side by side to keep traffic moving throughout western parts of St. Louis County and St. Charles County. Information was gathered on the four Missouri River bridge crossings from St. Charles to St. Louis counties.

This information was provided to St. Louis motorists to inform them how traffic was flowing and provide tips on how to get around the bridge closure. Traffic has increased on the main detour, Route 370, and the local detour Route 364. Motorists are urged to use the alternate routes and avoid I-70 especially during the morning and evening rush periods.



St. Louis leaders work with the Blanchette Bridge incident command center to help manage traffic flow during the first week of the bridge closure.

After the closing of the westbound bridge, construction crews immediately began removing the concrete. The crews removed 240 feet of the bridge deck in the first three days. The next step is for the steel truss of the bridge to be blasted. It will be dropped into river in two separate blasts from mid to late November.

Along with the I-70 lane closures, the ramp from northbound Fifth Street to eastbound I-70 remains closed until fall 2013. For more information on the project, visit www.modot.org/blanchettebridge

Highway Safety Heroes of St. Louis Honored for Improving Safety on Missouri Roads

by Kara Price



Focusing on fatality reduction, the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety rolled out a new goal of 700 or fewer fatalities by 2016 at the Blueprint to Save More Lives Conference held in Branson. During the conference, Highway Safety Heroes were recognized with an awards luncheon that honored prestigious statewide and regional awards to those who have substantially advanced highway safety in Missouri. St. Louis County Police Department's Highway Safety Unit won the St. Louis regional Arrive Alive Award.

MoDOT Celebrates a New and Improved Major Route in Jefferson County

by Kara Price



MoDOT, elected officials and community partners celebrated the opening of the new lanes on McNutt Road after cutting the ribbon.

MoDOT's Jefferson County area team and the City of Herculaneum recently held a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the McNutt Road widening cost-share project. The event marks the opening of the new McNutt Road/Herculaneum crossing intersection, which is significant to Jefferson County motorists. It also celebrated the opening of the new added lanes on McNutt Road between Interstate 55 and Routes 61/67. McNutt Road from I-55 and Routes 61/67 needed to be expanded to accommodate the capacity of traffic that use this roadway on a daily basis. MoDOT widened McNutt Road to four thru lanes with additional turn lanes. MoDOT, state and local elected officials and Jefferson County community partners were in attendance.

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Comments & Suggestions

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Winter Operations Drill

Above left: Springfield Intermediate Maintenance Worker Charolette Scott, left, and Seasonal Maintenance Worker James Durden check a truck's oil during a pre-trip inspection. (Photo by Dan Ream)

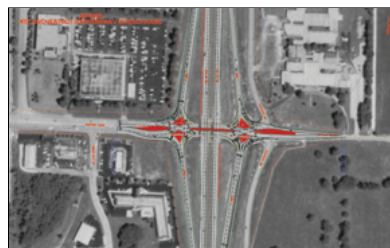
Above right: Joplin Senior Construction Inspector Chris Calandro, left, and Joplin Senior Maintenance Worker Brenda Beerly inspect a snowplow's connections -- pins, hydraulic hoses and lift chain. (Photo by Bob Becker)

Left: Senior Customer Service Representative Tracy Davault, left, goes over radio operations with Senior General Services Specialist Janet Doty, one of the emergency on-call employees who will work in the Transportation Management Center of the Ozarks in Springfield. (Photo by Bob Edwards)



4th Diverging Diamond Interchange in Southwest District Opens to Traffic

by Bob Edwards



Chestnut Expressway at Route 65 Diverging Diamond Interchange.

University and Evangel University.

Construction at Chestnut Expressway and Route 65, which cost \$2.6 million, began in April. The project includes widening the northbound-to-westbound ramp and southbound-to-westbound ramp.

MoDOT, Greene County and the City of Springfield were partners in the project. Hartman Construction of Springfield was the prime contractor.

The Southwest District's fourth Diverging Diamond Interchange was opened to traffic late Saturday, Nov. 10, at Chestnut Expressway and Route 65 in Springfield.

Chestnut Expressway had been closed Friday evening to enable contractor crews to complete the striping, sign installation and signal coordination needed for the DDI design.

The project's goal is to ease congestion and improve safety at one of the main entry points to Springfield on the city's far east side.

Many commuters use Chestnut Expressway to drive into the heart of the city to reach various businesses, including O'Reilly Automotive's headquarters, as well as city and county government offices, Missouri State University, Ozarks Technical Community College, Drury

Other Diverging Diamond Interchanges have been built at Kansas Expressway and I-44 and National Avenue and Route 60, both in Springfield, and Route 248 and Route 65 in Branson.

Other DDIs are under construction at Range Line Road and I-44 in Joplin and Kansas Expressway and Route 60 in Springfield.

Elsewhere in Missouri, DDIs have been built in the Kansas City, St. Louis and Southeast districts.

Intersection Projects a Boon to Safety

by Angela Eden

As 2012 rolls to a close so do improvements to 16 different intersections in the Southwest District.

Depending on the needs at each intersection, the projects include left-turn and/or right-turn lanes, U-turn lanes, new traffic signals, new red signal ahead flashing signs and, in one case, a new round-about.

Safety is the number one goal.

"Our focus is to reduce fatalities and disabling injuries," Assistant District Engineer Dan Salisbury said.

Better traffic flow is another outcome, District Traffic Engineer Joe Rickman said.

"All of these projects will help ... by reducing congestion and providing a safer place to make turning movements," he said.

Here are the intersection projects completed in 2012:

- Route 14 at Route NN, Ozark
- Route 14 at Main Street, Nixa
- Route 160/13 at Route AA, north of Nixa
- Route 160/13 at South Street, Nixa
- Route 160/13 at Route O, south of Highlandville
- Route 160/13 at Route HH, south of Highlandville
- Route 160/13 at Route V, south of Highlandville
- Route 160/13 at Spokane Road/Golf Creek Road, Spokane
- Route 160/13 at Route 176-East, south of Spokane
- Route 160/13 at Bass Hollow Road, south of Spokane
- Route 160/13 at Holt Woods Road, south of Spokane
- Route 60 at Oakwood Ave./Farm Road 93, Republic
- Route 43 at Route 96, north of Webb City
- Business 65 at St. James Street, Hollister
- Route 65 at Rochester Road, south of Hollister
- Route 76 at Route T, east of Branson



New turn lanes and traffic signal at Business 65 and St. James Street in Hollister. (Photo by Angela Eden)



Unity Highlighted At 60/65 Dedication

The value of unity and partnering was the theme when the \$71-million reconstruction project at Route 60/65 in Springfield was dedicated Nov. 1. Joining in the ceremony were, from left, business owner and commuter Eric Peterson, Greene County Associate Commissioner Roseann Bentley, U.S. Sen. Roy Blunt, Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission member Joe Carmichael, U.S. Rep. Billy Long, Springfield Mayor Bob Stephens and Southwest District Engineer Becky Baltz. (Photo by Bob Edwards)

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Southeast District

Heroes Way Sign Dedication Ceremony Held to Honor SGT Brandon L. Wallace

A Heroes Way dedication ceremony honoring Sgt. Brandon L. Wallace was held Friday, Nov. 9, at 1:45 p.m., at the Crystal City High School Auditorium, located at 1100 Mississippi Ave. in Crystal City, Mo. Exit 175 A on Interstate 55 was named the SGT Brandon L. Wallace interchange.

Army Sgt. Brandon L. Wallace, of the 1451st Transportation Company, 13th Command, Iraq; died April 14, 2007 in Fallujah, Iraq, when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle. Wallace graduated from Crystal City High School in 1998 and was also a graduate of the St. Charles Police Academy.

Wallace's awards include the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Kosovo Campaign Bronze Service Star, Iraq Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon, NATO Medal and the Combat Action Badge.

Speakers included:

- Mr. Brendan Fahey on behalf of U.S. Senator Claire McCaskill
- Ms. MaryBeth Wolf on behalf of U.S. Senator Roy Blunt
- Letter read by Ms. Judy Wagner on behalf of Missouri Senator Ryan McKenna, District 22
- Missouri Representative Ron Casey, District 103
- Crystal City Mayor, Thomas Schilly
- Crystal City Police Officer and friend of Sgt. Wallace, Jeff Wynn
- MoDOT Southeast District Engineer Mark Shelton

The Heroes Way Interstate Interchange Program legislation, passed in 2009, allows interstate interchanges to be designated for Missouri residents, who were in the armed forces and were killed in action on or after Sept. 11, 2001, in either Afghanistan or Iraq. In 2011, the original law was expanded to include state numbered highways.

To view videos and photos from the dedication ceremony, please visit www.modot.org/southeast/news_and_information/special_events/sgt_wallace_nov2012.htm.



To view additional videos and photos from the ceremony, visit www.modot.org/southeast/news_and_information/special_events.

And the Winner Is...Jerome Henson!



Jerome Henson from the Southeast District's Sikeston Maintenance facility was October's Safety Jackpot Grab Bag Winner!

In early November, David Welch from the Safety Jackpot team surprised Jerome during a "morning-muster meeting" and conducted the grab bag drawing. Jerome won \$750.

To view photos from the grab bag drawing, please visit www.flickr.com/photos/43000037@N05/sets/72157631952649689/.

(l to r): District Health and Safety Manager Enos Criddle, Maintenance Superintendent Marvin Gillespie, Assistant Maintenance Supervisor Jerome Henson and David Welch from the Safety Jackpot Team

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